4/24/69

Dick,

My Carcanno is B-9334, by the way. Roma.

Your letter to me and the carbon of your letter to John of 4/21 arrived. As you know, I knew about the bullet 30.06. However, the principle is the same, I presume, and the effect.

Some I wrote about yesterday, like thecclips. When John runs out of ammo I'll let him have mine. I have written him about it without response.

I see nothing in the rifle that can cause the dents, unless it is the follower, and I think that would be or hit in the wrong place, assuming it could be the cause. I see nothing that could cause it on ejection. Firing is out of the question. With the power of the explosion removing dents, the only possible conclusions that come to mind immediately are that he did do them as you postulate or he or someone else added them afterward- unless the pictures got mixed up. Again, give me the list of the pectures you think we should make and I'll make arrangements. Here again John has been silent. I asked him what he wants. I guess he wants nothing more and will not take the time to say so.

I'm not expert and cannot argue on the bolt faces, but I am inclined to disagree. Unless there is special attention to that surface, the only changes in it should be additions. Nothing there should have been removed. Therefore with good pictures, especially negatives blown up to the exact same size and overlaid, it should be possible to identify identical markings, despite the wear on the bolyfface. I suggest this both ways: if marks that existed on the bolt face at the time of the firing cannot now be found on bullets fired from it, this negative test yields a positive result: that the same blot face did not make contact with the test bullets. These are such untrustworthy people, I would not put switching blots past them. They could still swear they used the same rifle. The negative test would still be a positive result.

My mistrust of Thompson you know. I see no such marks on 557 (which means nothing with the quality of the official photography) but I do see what could be light reflection. Not one of my fired casings has any such mark, but several have the tiniest snag, like something hard caught, on the open end.

I tried a cartridge, loading a single one by hand, and saw nothing that would or could cause this. I tried an empty shell. It went in easily- and remained there. I'll have to get a cleaning rod not to push it out. But, there is no difficulty putting empy shells in this rifle, individually, by hand. Did I not understand you to say otherwise?

We should move very, very slowly. There is no cause for rush and there is for caution.

I read you lucid, good piece last night. I'd have only a few minor suggestions that can await the final draft. The drawings are very good. My strongest single impression is that the stuff on targets-trajectories should be part of it, integrated. I made two notes, one of something that has often occurred to me: we should get the unfired bullet weighed, unless it was done.

Do you know if it was? I do not recall. The second is to note, if it is true, that the testimony is barren on denting as a consequence of the firing of the rifle in Washington and at Quantico and Aberdeen. However, if there was some denting and some not dented, or if all were dented and it is not in the testimony, that in itself is significant and attributes from a lack of forthrightness and completeness to dishonesty to the testimony.

Is it possible for the clip to have caused the dent on ejection?

Must get to other things. I have the chief's okay on the range and his range officer's, but I haven't been able to get the range officer on the phone. When I can I'll get everything to come together at one time and we'll do it.

Best,